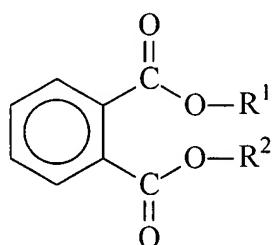


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CLAIMS

1. Process for the treatment of a metal hydrotreating catalyst in oxide form, characterized in that it consists in bringing it into contact, in the absence of a sulphur compound, with at least one compound chosen from orthophthalic acid, phthalic anhydride or the ester of general formula (I):



in which the symbols R¹ and R², which are identical or different, each represent an alkyl (linear or branched), cycloalkyl, aryl, alkylaryl or arylalkyl radical, it being possible for this radical to comprise from 1 to 18 carbon atoms and optionally one or more heteroatoms.

2. Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the compound brought into contact with the catalyst is an ester of general formula (I).

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3. Process according to either of Claims 1 and 2, characterized in that the ester of formula (I) is such that the symbols R¹ and R² represent identical alkyl radicals comprising from 1 to 8 carbon atoms.

- 20 4. Process according to one of Claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the ester of formula (I) is diethyl orthophthalate.

- 25 5. Process according to one of Claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the hydrotreating catalyst is based on molybdenum, tungsten, nickel and/or cobalt oxides, which oxides are deposited on a porous inorganic support.

6. Process according to one of Claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the ester of formula (I) brought into contact with the catalyst is dissolved in toluene.

5 7. Process for the sulphidation of a metal hydrotreating catalyst in oxide form, comprising:

- a) a stage of treatment as defined in one of Claims 1 to 6, followed by
- b) a stage of bringing the catalyst thus treated into contact with a sulphidation agent, and by
- 10 -c) a stage of bringing into contact with hydrogen;
stage b) being followed by stage c) or else stages b) and c) being carried out simultaneously.

8. Process according to Claim 7, characterized in that the sulphidation agent is a hydrocarbonaceous feedstock to be hydrodesulphurized, optionally with the addition of a sulphur compound, such as carbon disulphide, an organic sulphide, disulphide or polysulphide, a thiophene compound or a sulphur-comprising olefin.

9. Process according to either of Claims 7 and 8, characterized in that DMDS is employed as sulphidation agent, included in a proportion of 0.5 to 5%, preferably of 1 to 3%, in a hydrocarbonaceous feedstock.

10. Process according to one of Claims 7 to 9, characterized in that stage a) is carried out in an appropriate mixing device and the product obtained is sulphided in an industrial hydrotreating reactor, by simultaneous implementation of stages b) and c).

11. Process according to one of Claims 7 to 9, characterized in that stage a) and the operation in which the catalyst obtained is brought into contact with the sulphidation agent in accordance with stage b) are carried out in two mixing devices

which are identical or different and stage c) is carried out in an industrial hydrotreating reactor.

12. Process according to one of Claims 7 to 9, characterized in that stage a)
5 is carried out in an industrial hydrotreating reactor and is followed by the sulphidation
of the catalyst thus treated in the same reactor by simultaneous implementation of
stages b) and c).